

## **Transgender Community Focus Group Notes**

Tuesday, April 22, 2014

4:30-6:00 pm

Room 319

### **KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

**CISGENDER:** Sameness, One's gender assigned at birth is how that person identifies

**NONGENDER CONFORMING:** Person does not ascribe to societal definitions of male/female

**NONGENDER CONFORMING BEHAVIOR:** Person does not ascribe to the societal definitions of male/female behaviors, not necessarily related to how a person identifies

**GENDER IDENTITY:** How one identifies

**GENDER EXPRESSION:** How one expresses their gender

## **REPORT OUT HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Topic #1 Police Relations**

#### **What's Working?**

- None Reported

#### **What's Not Working?**

- Interactions with youth and how the police deal with youth violence
  - Youth are fearful of police. They hear stories of how adults within their communities are treated and then don't report incidents of violence.
- Issues with identification and drivers' licenses
  - Compared to ID issues within the immigration conversation
  - Gender profiling and harassment

#### **Gaps and Opportunities**

- Department of Justice is doing a transgender training
  - Eliminates the need to reinvent the wheel, as this training could be adapted to fit MPD's needs
  - DC Glampie made a connection and MPD is going to connect with an opportunity to have someone come in and do Trans 101 training with existing and new recruits.
- Policies exist on paper but a system needs to be created where these policies are implemented throughout the ranks of officers AND leadership
- Unaware of any transgender police officers
- Youth opportunities center is doing an evaluation on how the center is working with their trans youth. An opportunity to look at what is working and what isn't.
- Need to increase communication with partners, specifically between jail and MPD officers/leadership.

## **Topic #2 Employment**

### **What's Working?**

- We have large corporations inclusive of trans as far as policies and procedures
- The MN Human Rights statute provides backdrop and Minneapolis had language before the State (however language is confusing related to orientation/sexuality)
- Individual cities have policies that make it easier to change IDs than the state.

### **What's Not Working?**

- Digital Divide: There is a lack of skills for needed jobs, trans community has a more difficult time finding stable housing, etc. and therefore having computer access becomes more difficult
- People do not file discrimination or other harassment complaints because of a fear of retaliation
  - These underlie and compound the other "-isms"
- Issues with identification and drivers' licenses in hiring

### **Gaps and Opportunities**

- Need the creation of spaces, i.e. bathrooms
- HR training for employees on transgender issues
- Need more mentoring opportunities
- Policies need to be more clear

## **Topic #3 Health**

### **What's Working?**

- It's great that organizations like MN Transgender Health Coalition exist
- There are great providers at CUHCC Clinic (and that good providers do exist in general)

### **What's Not Working?**

- There is not a standard care of delivery for trans patients.
- Issues with identification and drivers' licenses (ID does not match how individual presents)
- Barriers to access: Especially related to cost
  - No insurance
  - Expensive procedures
  - Long term need for prescriptions for some transgender people
  - Most needed services are not covered (i.e. alignment surgery)

### **Gaps and opportunities**

- Standard Care of Delivery: There needs to be a mandate on cultural competency—A network that indicates whether or not a doctor can prove that they can care for transgender people
  - Especially related mental health needs
- Need more information regarding City's benefits for transition and whether or not these needed services are covered. (If so, move into the "What's Working Section. If not, this is an opportunity area).
- Work to create alternative reporting options (i.e. more than two choice for gender of forms (health questionnaires and insurance forms)
  - Could start with adding or changing the name questions to ask "what is your preferred name?"

## **Topic #4 Civic Participation**

### **What's Working?**

- This Group (referring to the Transgender Issues Workgroup)
- There is gender equity in city Leadership representation (City Council is ½ women, we have a female mayor, etc.)

### **What's Not Working?**

- We do not have baseline numbers (Focus group attendees would like to see data on voting or the number of transgender people on boards and commissions)
- Issues with identification and drivers' licenses (ID does not match how individual presents)
- Neighborhood organization are not reflective

### **Gaps and opportunities**

- There needs to be leadership pipelines to opportunities and the skills to be on boards, other civic opportunities, etc.
- There should be ally and diversity training for City employees. This could include sensitivity training.
- Work with St. Paul to create a similar work group
- We need to work on having gender representation without including binaries

## **Topic #5 Public Spaces**

### **What's Working?**

- Good Parks
- Support for transit
- The Transgender Issues Workgroup

### **What's Not Working?**

- Gender information is requested too often and when not necessary
  - Boards and Commissions
  - Sports programming at the Parks
- Issues of safety/feeling safe on public transit

### **Gaps and opportunities**

- Public education by City related to gender
- Need gender neutral bathrooms (clarification needed, unsure if this currently exists)
- Decrease the number of times that requests for gender are made
  - Hiring, schools, parks, etc.
- All forms should have more than two choices for gender